

Amendment to the Drawings:

Attached are replacements sheets for sheets 1 and 4 of the drawings. Applicants have submitted a substitute drawing sheet 1 placing the legend - - Prior Art - - on FIGS. 1 and 2. Applicants have also enclosed a substitute drawing sheet 4 for FIG. 7 which properly spells "Molecular".

Attachments: Replacement sheets 1 and 4 of the drawings

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 and 37-52 have been cancelled pursuant to the restriction requirement. Claim 23 has also been canceled, and Claims 21-36 remain on the case.

The drawings have been objected to because FIGS. 1 and 2 were not designated with the legend - - Prior Art - -. Applicants have submitted a substitute drawing sheet placing the legend - - Prior Art - - on FIGS. 1 and 2. Applicants have also enclosed a substitute drawing sheet for FIG. 7 which properly spells "Molecular".

The specification has been amended in paragraph [0003] by replacing "addition" with "additional". Additional amendments to paragraph [0003] correct typographical errors. Paragraphs [0010] and [0030], have been amended by replacing "substituent" with "substituents".

Claims 21-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. (a) as being unpatentable over what the Examiner maintains is "applicant's admitted prior art" (specification; paragraphs [0002]-[0003]; FIGS. 1 and 2) in view of Sonnenberg, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,303,664). The Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to independent claim 21 which recites a process including "topically applying a finely divided powder onto a plurality of polystyrene beads, the finely divided powder comprising brominated compounds including a brominated alkane having at least two substituent aromatic groups". Sonnenberg, et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,303,664 discloses an aqueous process including (a) adding an amount, effective for the purpose, of a bromine-attached aliphatic or aromatic flame retardant to a vinyl aromatic monomer such as a styrene; (b) suspending the styrene in water using a suitable suspending agent system; (c) adding a suitable blowing agent to the partially polymerized suspension and heating to impregnate the particles;

and (d) separating the impregnated beads from the aqueous suspension, washing and drying the beads. See column 3, lines 23-38. As such, Sonnenberg, et al., disclose a process in which the brominated compounds are incorporated into the beads. In fact, Sonnenberg, et al., teach incorporating hexabromocyclododecane into the beads rather than coated on the surface of the beads and warns against coating on the surface to avoid interference with the fusion of the beads when they are expanded into molded foam articles. See column 5, lines 21-24. As such, Sonnenberg, et al., actually teaches away from Applicant's claimed invention which calls for "topically applying a finely divided powder onto a plurality of polystyrene beads, the finely divided powder comprising brominated compounds including a brominated alkane having at least two substituent aromatic groups". Sonnenberg, et al., fails to disclose or suggest such a dry powder process using a brominated compound having two aromatic groups.

Further, Sonnenberg et al fails to suggest the amount of the finely divided powder applied as recited in claims 29-30. Sonnenberg et al also fails to suggest the specific brominated compound recited in claims 32, 34 and 26.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 21-22 and 24-36 now in the case.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cary W. Brooks', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cary W. Brooks
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